

# Nature & You

News and Events from the Missouri Department of Conservation • May/June 2013



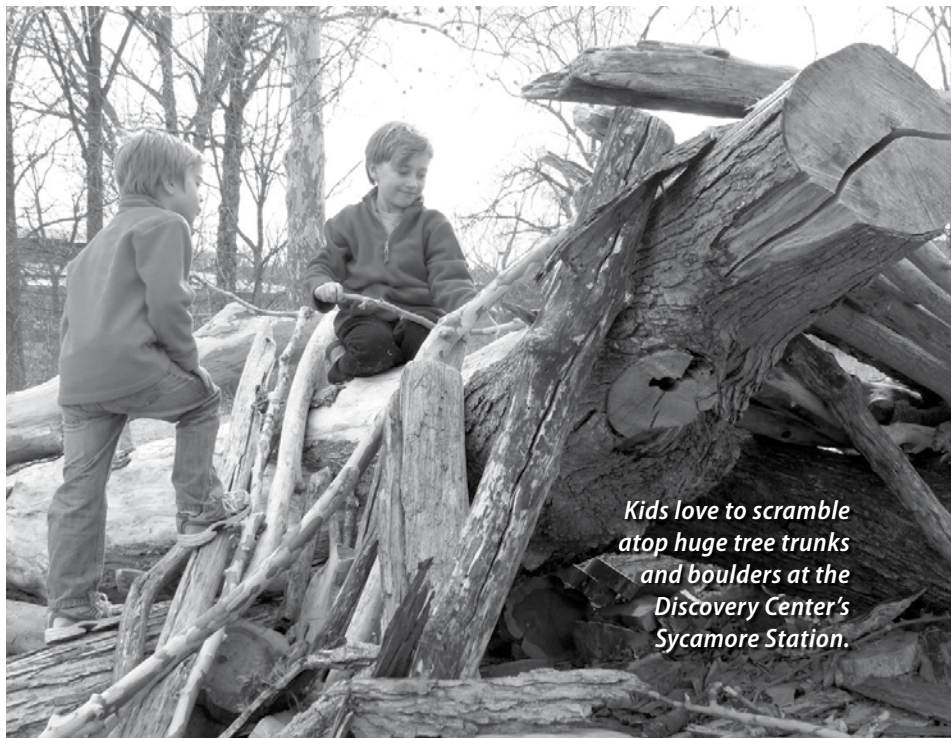
## A Natural Way to Play

*New outdoor play areas are connecting kids with nature*

**W**hat fun it is to crawl through a hollow log, climb on a giant boulder or create a stick fort as imagination and adventure set sail.

Two new playgrounds welcome children and their parents to mix nature with play. The Burr Oak Woods Nature Center in Blue Springs and the Anita B. Gorman Discovery Center in Kansas City both have opened outdoor play areas. The Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC) designates them as Discover Nature Classrooms. Children and parents simply see them as fun in the fresh air.

Explorative play in nature creates golden memories for children while forging deeper connections with the natural world. Think back to your childhood, where clear and dear memories involve places where imagination had free reign. We built amazing castles and forts from



*Kids love to scramble atop huge tree trunks and boulders at the Discovery Center's Sycamore Station.*

sticks and stones and acted out wonderful stories.

My friends and I used to say: "meet at Leaning Stick Fort through the Three Eyes just past the Alien Ship." This was our code for: go past the old collapsed shed, through the small tunnels under the railroad tracks and climb up the leaning trees on the other side.

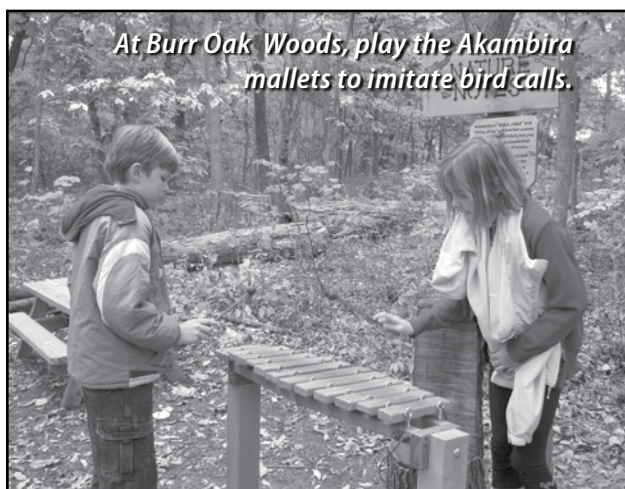
In the Discover Nature Classroom at Burr Oak Woods Nature Center, play like an animal as you use the Akambira mallets to imitate the "Peter, Peter, Peter" bird call of a tufted titmouse. Charming wooden signs name each activity area and include a fun nature fact and activity to do with your kids. Jump from

stump to stump in the Habitat Hop, crawl through the hollow log of Forest Families, stamp out animal tracks in the huge sand "box" of Fabulous Footprints and more. Discover a new way to play in nature in all seven different areas of this Discover Nature Classroom.

As you explore Sycamore Station at Anita B. Gorman Discovery Center, scramble atop huge boulders or climb over giant logs. Tantalize your senses with the newly built living walls of plants with many smells, textures and colors. Many children also enjoy crawling through the log tunnels and finding the hidden trail when their school visits for an education program.

However you play, delight in the experience of being outside as you try out these new Discover Nature Classrooms brought to you for free by MDC!

— Lisa Richter, Naturalist  
Burr Oak Woods Nature Center



*At Burr Oak Woods, play the Akambira mallets to imitate bird calls.*

# Burr Oak Woods Conservation Nature Center

1401 NW Park Road, Blue Springs, MO 64015 • [mdc.mo.gov/node/280](http://mdc.mo.gov/node/280)



Located in Blue Springs, Missouri, one mile north of I-70 and one mile west of MO 7 on Park Road. Six trails, 1,071 wooded acres, two picnic areas, indoor wildlife viewing area, 3,000 gallon native fish and turtle aquarium, hands-on nature exhibits, gift shop, and sales of fishing and hunting permits.

## NATURE CENTER HOURS:

Tuesday–Friday: 7 AM–6 PM

Saturday: 8 AM–5 PM

## AREA AND TRAILS:

Daily: 7 AM–6 PM

Daylight Saving Time: 7 AM–8 PM

Closed Thanksgiving Day, day after

Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Years

## TO REGISTER FOR A PROGRAM:

Programs are free. Call 816-228-3766 to sign up for a program requiring registration on or after the first business day of that month. If you are unable to attend a program, please call and cancel as a courtesy.

## What's for Dinner?

Wednesdays & Saturdays • 3 PM

*Walk-in* (All ages)

Discover what's for dinner at Burr Oak Woods as the captive amphibians, fish and turtles enjoy their feast every Wednesday and Saturday. The snakes are fed every other Friday (May 3, 17, 31 and June 14, 28).

## Family Tracking Fun

May 4 • Saturday • 1–2:30 PM

*No registration required*

(families with children ages 6+)

Tracking is a fun and challenging skill to add interest to your family hikes. Come learn to identify various tracks and the clues they reveal about the animals that left them.

## Bird Hikes of Spring!

May 8 • Wednesday • 4–6 PM

May 16 • Thursday • 8–10 AM

May 21 • Tuesday • 7–9 AM

May 29 • Wednesday • 7–9 AM

*Registration required* (adults; ages 10+ are welcome to attend with an adult participant)

Let the tweet, twitter and trills of local and returning birds lure you outside for a successful bird hike with a Master Naturalist. This is a great time to capture a glimpse of those birds that only briefly pass us by.

## Little Acorns: Wiggle Worms

May 8 • Wednesday • 10–11 AM or 1–2 PM

*Registration required* (ages 3–5)

Worms are slimy, that's a fact! But even if you prefer gummy worms over earthworms, worms are vital to many of Missouri's wildlife. Come out and learn what's so extraordinary about these slimy creatures.

## Home School: Life in a Pond

May 8 • Wednesday • 10–11:30 AM

for ages 6–8, 9–11, 12–18 or 1–2:30 PM

for ages 6–8 *Registration required*

Who lives in our pond? Fish, frogs and even insects call ponds home. Join us as we grab nets and discover the macroinvertebrate communities that live in the Burr Oak Woods pond.

## Discover Nature: Family Fishing

May 11 • Saturday • 9–11 AM

*Registration required* (families)

Summer is a great time to take your family fishing! We will teach some fishing basics, provide equipment and worms and then let you and your family try your luck. Kids who attend will be entered in a drawing at the end of the summer for a new fishing pole and tackle box.

## Native Pressed Flower Candles

May 11 • Saturday • 12:30–2 PM

*Registration required* (all ages)

Enjoy learning about native Missouri wildflowers while you create a candle from a variety of pre-dried flowers, scents and colors of wax. After satisfying your crafty urges, discover some gorgeous wildflowers with a stroll around the Discovery Trail.



## Babes in the Woods: Pond Play

May 14 • Tuesday • 10–11 AM

*Registration required* (babes under 36 months) Bring your babe for a morning of play while strolling around Burr Oak Woods largest pond. Water is a great place to capture the attention of your little one and share glimpses of nature.

## The Wild Ones: Edible Wildflowers

May 14 • Tuesday • 1–3 PM

*Registration required* (adults) Some of Missouri's loveliest wildflowers have beauty that isn't just skin deep. They are delicious and nutritious too!

## Conservation Kids Club:

### Take Your Parent Camping Night!

May 17–18 • Friday–Saturday • 6 PM–8 AM

*Registration required*

(ages 7–13 with an adult)

Kids! Have you always wanted to go camping at Burr Oak Woods? Whether you are an old hand at camping or you have always wanted to try it, this campout is for you. Don't miss out on this special evening under the stars. Activities include canoeing, fishing, stories and songs around the campfire.

## Missouri's Fantastic Fish

May 18 • Saturday • 1–2:30 PM

*No registration required* (all ages)

Did you know that there are more than 200 species of fish in Missouri? Join us as we dive into the wet and wild world of fish, from the giant blue catfish to the tiny pygmy sunfish!

# Burr Oak Woods Conservation Nature Center

1401 NW Park Road, Blue Springs, MO 64015 • [mdc.mo.gov/node/280](http://mdc.mo.gov/node/280)

## Rockin' & Readin' Nature Tales

May 25 · Saturday · 11 AM–Noon

June 29 · Saturday · 11 AM–Noon

*Walk-in* (ages 2+) Join us for a story hour as we lead you on fantastic nature adventures! We will meet butterflies, birds, mammals and all sorts of magnificent creatures! We will cross rivers, discover mysteries within the forest and fly across the prairies. Our imaginations are the only limits.

## Return of the Insects

May 25 · Saturday · 1–2:30 PM

*No registration required* (ages 6+)

Whether you adore bugs or find them creepy, come to Burr Oak Woods to find out why they are essential to our gardens and our ecosystem. Maybe by the time you leave, one of your new favorite animals will be a bug!

**Babes in the Woods,  
Little Acorns, Home School  
and Conservation Kids Club**  
programs will return in  
September.

## Families Beginning Archery

June 1 · Saturday · 9:30 AM–Noon

*Registration required beginning May 1*  
(families with children ages 8+)

Our youth have rediscovered the ancient art of archery! Come with your children to learn the fundamentals and proper techniques of this classic sport; then enjoy some target practice together.



*Rediscover the  
ancient art  
of archery.*

## In Celebration of Missouri's State Bird

June 8 · Saturday · 10 AM–Noon

*Registration required* (all ages)

Come discover Missouri's state bird, the eastern bluebird, with special guest Larry Dobson from the Missouri Bluebird Society. You will discover these beautiful birds' habitat and favorite foods as well as how to attract them to your property.

## Tick Time

June 8 · Saturday · 1–2 PM

*No registration required* (ages 8+)

It's awful to look down after a pleasant hike to see what you thought was a piece of dirt is actually a blood sucking pest! Don't let these annoying arachnids keep you from enjoying nature. Come discover their purpose in nature and how to deter them from feasting on you.

## Build a House for Missouri's State Bird

June 8 · Saturday · 2–4 PM

*Registration required* (families)

Discover Missouri's state bird, the eastern bluebird. You can play a role in bluebird conservation as you build a bluebird box of your own.

## The Wild Ones: Wild Edibles along the Little Blue River

June 15 · Saturday · 9–11 AM

*Registration required* (adults)

Meet us on the Little Blue Trace Trail for an unforgettable stroll in an area rich with biodiversity. Along this historic bottomland forest, you will be amazed at how many of the plants are edible.

## Nature's Clean-up Crew

June 15 · Saturday · 1–2:30 PM

*Registration required* (all ages)

Vultures, cockroaches and millipedes, oh my! They may seem gross, but decomposers and scavengers are essential for keeping nature clean. Join us as we learn about these unique critters and see some of them up close!



*Missouri's smallest  
bird is also one  
of the liveliest.*

## Hummers of Summer

June 22 · Saturday · 1–2 PM

*No registration required* (all ages)

Missouri's smallest bird is also one of the liveliest, captivating and endearing. Although tiny, the ruby-throated hummingbird works incredibly hard during its summer breeding season here. You'll soon have a lot more to appreciate the next time one zips by!

## Family Crayfish Catchin'

June 29 · Saturday · 10–11:30 AM

*Registration required* (families with children ages 3+) Crayfish are great indicators of



the health of Missouri's streams. You will explore Burr Oak Creek, challenge your ability to capture this elusive creature and share a fun-filled water adventure with your family.

## Building Closure Dates

The Discovery Center,  
Parma Woods and Lake City  
Shooting Ranges will be  
closed for state holidays  
May 8 and May 27.

# Lake City Shooting Range and Outdoor Education Center

28505 E. Truman Road, Landahl Park, Buckner, MO 64016 • [mdc.mo.gov/node/282](http://mdc.mo.gov/node/282)



Located on 60 acres of forests and fields near Blue Springs, Missouri, six miles north of I-70 on MO 7 and two miles east of MO 7 on Truman Road in Landahl Park. Facilities include an outdoor education center, archery, pistol, rifle and shotgun ranges, including skeet and trap.

## HOURS:

### May 1–September 15

Wednesday–Sunday: Noon–6 PM

### September 16–April 30

Wednesday–Sunday: Noon–4:30 PM

Closed Monday and Tuesday

and all state holidays.

**FACILITIES AND FEES:** Available for individual or group use. Call for information and possible restrictions.

- Rifle/pistol range: \$3 booth per hour
- Trap/Skeet: \$3 per round per person
- Archery range: \$3 per person per hour

## TO REGISTER FOR A PROGRAM:

Programs are free. Call 816-249-3194 to sign up for a program requiring registration. If you are unable to attend a program, please call and cancel as a courtesy.

## Beginning Archery

May 3 · Friday · 9–11:30 AM

*Registration required* (ages 12–17)

Archery is becoming very popular with young people. Many competitions are held between school archery teams. Learn more of the fundamentals of shooting archery such as proper foot position, draw technique, equipment and follow through.

## Basic Handgun

May 5 · Sunday · 8–11:30 AM

*Registration required* (ages 18+)

A novice class for people who have little or no experience in handling and shooting a handgun. Topics to be covered will include safety in the home, types of handguns, different parts of the handgun, the variety of calibers, ammunition and marksmanship. Class includes range time.

## Introduction to Metallic Cartridge Reloading: Pistol

May 10 · Friday · 6–8:30 PM and

May 11 · Saturday · 9–10:30 AM

*Registration required* (adults)

If you have ever been interested in reloading your own pistol cases; this is a good way to get started. We will cover many different topics of reloading including equipment, safety concerns, loading data and more. This is a hands-on course.

## Introduction to Skeet Shooting

May 11 · Saturday · 9–11:30 AM

*Registration required* (ages 12+)

Are you a trap shooter who wants an exciting and quicker target game? Why not try skeet shooting? Skeet shooting is a great way to improve your basic shotgun skills and improve your hit ratio on all types of winged game. You may even pick up a new sport at the same time.

## Introduction to Double Trap

May 23 · Thursday · 6–9 PM

*Walk-in* (ages 16+) Open to everyone; free shooting. This is an advanced shooting sport which is geared towards those shooters who are accomplished at shooting American Trap and would like to challenge themselves. Instruction will be on proper stance, choke selection and swing through. Special class requirement: only double barreled and semi-automatic shotguns.

## Teens and .22 Cal

June 1 · Saturday · 9–11 AM

*Registration required* (ages 11–17)

This course is designed for teens who would like to explore the safe usage of firearms. Topics to be covered will include safety, parts of a .22 rifle, marksmanship and much more.

## Refuse To Be A Victim: NRA Course

June 8 · Saturday · 8–Noon

*Registration required* (adult)

*Refuse To Be A Victim* is a nationally recognized crime prevention program, developed by the National Rifle Association that promotes awareness and prevention of criminal attack. Topics covered include home, automobile, phone, technological, travel and personal security.

## Introduction to Shotgun Reloading

June 14 · Friday · 6–8:30 PM and

June 15 · Saturday · 9–10:30 AM

*Registration required* (adults)

Do you enjoy shooting clay targets but fret about rising ammo costs? Reduce the cost of shooting trap or skeet by reloading your own shotgun shells. We will show you the basic equipment needed, what shotgun hulls to use and the all safety precautions when reloading. On Saturday, you will be able to go to the trap range and try out your reloaded ammunition.

## Women's Firearm Safety– Phase II

June 15 · Saturday · 8–11:30 AM

*Registration required* (women ages 18+)

After completing Phase I, let's learn more about handguns. This course is designed for women who are interested in gaining more information about firearms. Topics discussed will include storage of firearms, different types of handguns and calibers. Build your marksmanship skills with more range time and how to clean your firearm.

## Beyond the Basics of Pistol Shooting

June 27 · Thursday · 5:30–9 PM

*Registration required* (adults)

Looking to expand your knowledge and abilities on the pistol range? In this course you will learn to shoot strong hand and weak hand; staff will assist you in working through malfunctions of your firearm and you will learn new techniques to improve your overall marksmanship. This course is geared toward the more advanced shooters.

# Parma Woods Shooting Range and Outdoor Education Center

15900 NW River Road, PO Box 14024, Parkville, MO 64152 • [mdc.mo.gov/node/283](http://mdc.mo.gov/node/283)

## Understanding firearms promotes safe use

**A**s a professional firearms instructor, I have had the opportunity to work with a tremendous number of students over the years. The reasons for a person's interest in firearms are as varied as the people themselves. Some may be interested in hunting while others may be interested only in target shooting. Some may take to arms in an effort to protect themselves or those they care about from violent attacks. Others may simply enjoy collecting firearms.

The staff members at MDC shooting ranges have helped people overcome fears. We have worked with hundreds of youth to teach important life skills. We have partnered with local schools and businesses to train and educate. We have worked with government agencies to provide a place for training peace officers, and provided opportunities for legislators to learn about firearms.

MDC professionals have done all this while maintaining the high level of safety you have come to expect at our ranges. However, one of the most important things we have accomplished thus far has been working for and serving you. It has truly been our pleasure.

As you all are aware, the political climate of recent times has focused in on many issues related to firearms regulations. MDC supports the shooting sports and the right to gun ownership, though the agency is neutral regarding current political debates about proposed firearms regulations. Regardless of your position, there has never been a better time to educate yourself about firearms. Parma Woods in the coming months will be offering a full line of programs that will provide opportunities for you to learn about firearms in a safe environment. Space limitations prohibit us from listing all our classes here. For more info, visit us on the web at [www.mdc.mo.gov/node/283](http://www.mdc.mo.gov/node/283). We look forward to working with you and for you.

— Nathan Woodland,  
Parma Woods Range Supervisor

### .22 Plinking Class

May 9 · Thursday · 6–8 PM

*Registration required* (Ages 11+; ages 11–17 must be accompanied by an adult)

The .22 long rifle is inexpensive and fun to shoot. Join our staff of certified and trained instructors as we have some good old plinking fun. We will shoot many different types of reactive targets in a safe and controlled environment. This is not an introductory course; participants should have a solid understanding of firearms safety and be able to apply the basic principles appropriately.

### Discover Nature: Outdoor Photography Basics

May 22 · Wednesday · 6–9 PM

*Registration required* (All ages)

Outdoor photography can be a rewarding way to discover nature. Bring your camera out for a fun filled evening as we explore some simple tips that will improve your photos. There will be a couple field exercises so dress accordingly.

### Introduction to Shotgun Shooting

May 29 · Wednesday · 6–9 PM

*Registration required* (Ages 11+; ages 11–17 must be accompanied by an adult)

Successful shotgun shooting begins with learning the proper fundamentals and is followed by practicing their application. This course will provide both. Our instructors will troubleshoot some of the common mistakes shotgun shooters make. Live fire will be included so dress appropriately.

### Introduction to Firearms

June 12 · Wednesday · 6–9 PM and

June 13 · Thursday · 6–9 PM

*Registration required* (Ages 11+; ages 11–17 must be accompanied by an adult)

Staying safe around firearms requires the appropriate level of knowledge and skill combined with a positive attitude. Join our certified firearms instructors as we explore the fun of shooting in a safe and controlled environment. This course will cover all major types of firearms and will include live fire.



Located in Platte County, Missouri. Go west of downtown Parkville on Route FF to River Road, then west 3 miles to the entrance located just west of I-435. Facilities are available for individual or group use and include a rifle/pistol range, shotgun patterning range, and archery range.

### HOURS:

**May 1–September 30**

Monday and Tuesday: 2 PM–8 PM

Friday–Sunday: 10 AM–4 PM

**October 1–April 30**

Friday–Tuesday: Noon–4:30 PM

Closed Wednesday and Thursday and all state holidays.

### FACILITIES AND FEES:

- Rifle/pistol range: \$3 booth per hour
- Archery range: \$3 per person per hour

### TO REGISTER FOR A PROGRAM:

Programs are free. Call 816-891-9941 to sign up for a program requiring registration. If you are unable to attend a program, please call and cancel as a courtesy to those on the waiting list.

### Creating Cartridges: Level 1

June 20 · Thursday · 6–9 PM

*Registration required* (Ages 11+; ages 11–17 must be accompanied by an adult)

Reloading metallic cartridges is often very intimidating to newcomers. Attend this course to discover how easy it can be to get started. Class topics include steps to reload your own ammunition, differences in equipment, case preparation, how to set up the reloading dies, what to do when things aren't quite right and reloading safety. This class is free of charge and all equipment and components are provided. Safety glasses are provided, but feel free to bring your own.

# Anita B. Gorman **Discovery Center**

4750 Troost Avenue, Kansas City, MO 64110 • [mdc.mo.gov/node/281](http://mdc.mo.gov/node/281)



Located in Kansas City, Missouri, just east of the Plaza near 47th and Troost. Six hands-on workshops explore Missouri's fish, forest and wildlife with a Lewis and Clark theme. Discovery Center is a showcase for environmental architecture with four acres of native landscaping. Buy books and hunting/fishing permits at the gift shop.

## **HOURS:**

Monday–Friday: 8 AM–5 PM

1st and 3rd Tuesdays: 8 AM–9 PM

1st and 3rd Saturdays: 9 AM–4 PM

Closed all state holidays.

## **TO REGISTER FOR A PROGRAM:**

Programs are free. Call 816-759-7300 to sign up for a program requiring registration.

## **Heritage Days Special Event**

May 4 · Saturday · 10 AM–2:30 PM

*Walk-in* (all ages) Join us for a journey to explore Missouri's rich natural resources and heritage. Demonstrations, crafts and music will transport you back in time. Hands-on activities including primitive fire starting, archery, atlatl, orienteering and more will enhance your understanding of Missouri's history and people.

## **Molly Postlewait: Lamp of Freedom**

May 4 · Saturday · 2:00 PM

*No registration required* (ages 10+)

You will be transported to a different time and era, glimpse into life in 1858 through an Underground Railroad story set along the Missouri/Kansas border. Molly Postlewait brings the past to life with Missouri history, superstitions and mystery with this outstanding interpretive program winner.

## **Nature Nuts Storytime**

May 4 · Saturday · 10–11 AM or 1–2 PM

May 18 · Saturday · 10–11 AM or 1–2 PM

*No registration required* (ages 3–8; all welcome) Join volunteer naturalists for a fantastic journey through forests, streams and other magical places as they read select books. Children will participate in a hands-on nature activity.

## **Scout Program**

May 7 · Tuesday · Evening

*Registration required* (scouts)

Scout leaders, are you lacking expertise or equipment to complete conservation badges? Bring your troop to Discovery Center. Education Specialist staff will provide a program helping your scouts with rank achievement. All Missouri scout groups of 10-24 participants are welcome to schedule a free program. Please contact Wendy Parrett at (816) 759-7305 ext. 1141 or Wendy.Parrett@mdc.mo.gov to schedule an evening program on the first Tuesday evening of the month.

## **Native Plants for your Landscape**

May 18 · Saturday · 10 AM–2:30 PM

*Walk-in* (all ages)

Whether you have a balcony garden, a small urban lot or a small acreage, you can include native plants in your landscape. Create beauty and interest while furnishing food and cover for wildlife. We'll get you started with expert advice and free starter plants and a native tree or shrub. Tour our native gardens for inspiration and enjoyment.



*Purple coneflower*

## **Annual Plant Exchange**

May 18 · Saturday · 9:30 AM–Noon

*Walk-in* (all ages)

Get a jump start on your outdoor gardens, share successful and bountiful plants from your garden and enjoy the beauty of others plantings. Exchange plants from your home with those from other Kansas City gardeners. Everyone will leave with new plants to grow this spring and summer. See the article on page 7 for more details.

## **Choose Your Own Adventure Campout**

May 18–19 · Saturday–Sunday · 3 PM–Noon

*Registration required* (families with children ages 10+) If you have attended our "Choose Your Own Adventure" please join us for an overnight campout at a secure location in one of our local parks. At the camp site you will employ your new skills to set up the campsite and prepare dinner. The day will include a hike and a campfire complete with s'mores and other fireside treats. On Sunday morning you will prepare breakfast, tear down the tents and practice your "leave no trace" skills.



## **Bugs of the Blue**

May 21 · Tuesday · 6:30–8PM

*Walk-in* (adults; ages 15+ are welcome to attend with an adult participant)

Have you ever heard of a benthic macroinvertebrate? Basically, it is a "bug" that lives on the bottom of a stream or pond. These fascinating damselflies, midges, and clams can actually tell us about the health of our watershed. Their mere presence might mean that a stream is healthy or their absence could indicate too much pollution. Join us indoors this evening to take a closer look at these magnified macroinvertebrates!

# Anita B. Gorman **Discovery Center**

4750 Troost Avenue, Kansas City, MO 64110 • [mdc.mo.gov/node/281](http://mdc.mo.gov/node/281)

## Conservation Express

June 1 • Saturday • 10 AM–3PM

*Registration required* (ages 10+)

Hitch a ride for a day filled with natural discoveries. Your journey will take you to three unique sites featuring water, prairie and forest ecosystems. Your MDC guides will lead you on a short hike helping you interpret the natural resources of each area. Plan to bring lunch, water, camera and comfortable hiking shoes. Space is limited in the vehicles; however you are welcome to follow us in your own vehicle if you choose.



## Nature Nuts Storytime

June 1 • Saturday • 10–11 AM or 1–2 PM

June 15 • Saturday • 10–11 AM or 1–2 PM

*No registration required* (ages 3–8; all welcome) Join volunteer naturalists for a fantastic journey through forests, streams and other magical places as they read select books. Children will participate in a hands-on nature activity.

## Swim Fish Swim!

June 1 • Saturday • 10 AM–2:30 PM

*Walk-in* (all ages)

June 8–9 is the annual free fishing weekend in the State of Missouri. Fish are sleek swimmers that come in many shapes and sizes. Come and learn more about the fish you can catch and create a fish using recycled elements.

## Discover Nature: Hiking Sticks and Hiking

June 1 • Saturday • 10 AM–3 PM

*Registration required* (women; ages 12+)

Ever been out walking or hiking and wish you had a sturdy stick? Decorate your own customized walking/hiking stick from provide recycled broom and mop handles. Afterwards we'll walk the grounds of the Discovery Center learning how to fully utilize the stick. We'll stop for an hour lunch break, plan accordingly

## Fins to Fashion

June 4 • Tuesday • 6:30–8:30 PM

*Walk-in* (all ages) Missouri is home to over 200 species of fish. The ability to identify



our fish is a valuable skill for any naturalist or outdoors person. Learn the basics while creating a wearable work of art with molded fish and textile inks. Bring a t-shirt or use one of ours.

## The Treasure with Trees

June 15 • Saturday • 10 AM–2:30 PM

*Walk-in* (all ages)

Trees are a tremendous natural resource used every day by people and wildlife. Get to know Missouri trees by building a wood wren house (sessions start at 10:00, 11:30 and 1:30) or creating a work of art using leaves and block inks on the printing press. Bring us leaves from your backyard trees and we will help with identification.

## Stayin' Alive

June 18 • Tuesday • 6–8:30 PM

*Registration required* (adults; ages 15+ are welcome to attend with an adult participant) Survival situations are most common in the wilderness, but can also occur in the urban or rural environments. This program will help you understand the seven basic survival needs. Learn essential skills including fire starting, knot tying and more through hands on practice. The program will conclude with a survival scenario challenge.

## Calling all gardeners for annual plant exchange

**T**he Seventh Annual Citywide Plant and Seed Exchange will be from 9:30 a.m. to noon on May 18 at the Gorman Discovery Center. All gardeners are encouraged to pot extra plants and cuttings, label them and bring them to trade with other gardeners. Feel free also to bring in seeds, bulbs, tubers and cuttings. But please make sure they are plainly marked.

Plan on this event and give yourself time to dig up extras to share with others. The plants do better if you pot them a week or two ahead of time. While here, visit the Discovery Center's rain, wildflower and butterfly gardens. These gardens are planted to attract wildlife for viewing and you can use the same designs at home.

Please do not bring weedy, invasive or super-common plants. Bring a few, take a few; bring a lot, take a lot. Everyone is invited and it's free!

## Love Nature? Make a Difference!

**I**f you have a passion for nature, put it to use by joining the Missouri Master Naturalists. The program is sponsored by the Missouri Department of Conservation and Missouri Extension. Master Naturalists improve our natural resources through volunteer service with local partner organizations. Trainees receive 40 hours of education and contribute 40 hours of service to conservation projects such as native habitat restoration, citizen scientist research and presenting or assisting with nature education programs.

To receive more information about the Master Naturalist program and application materials, please visit [www.osagetrails.com](http://www.osagetrails.com).

## nature & art

TUESDAY, MAY 7, 6 TO 8 P.M.

**Wildflowers and urban wildlife of the Discovery Center native landscape are the focus of an urban youth photography exhibit on display through July. Join us for a gallery opening gala with light refreshments and an awesome art activity for kids.**

# For fishing fun, head to MDC lakes

**T**hey're fishy, easy to reach and safe for families. That's why ponds and lakes at Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC) wildlife areas make excellent fishing spots in May and June. Veteran anglers enjoy these waters. But if you're just learning to fish or wanting to teach a child how to fish, the MDC fishing holes are an extra good choice.

Accessibility is a plus.

"People can fish from the bank at our areas," said Jake Allman, an MDC fisheries biologist. "They don't have to have a boat. There's also a nice variety of fish such as bass, bluegill, crappie and catfish. Even well into summer, a lot of these fish will be biting."

The banks on many lakes and ponds are mowed regularly, making them



easier to reach. Managers often place brush or trees in the water near the banks, which is a good thing. Small fish and insects are attracted to the havens provided by underwater habitat. That attracts the big fish. Often these brush piles or trees are close to the bank or at least within easy casting distance.

Fishing equipment needed for smaller waters can be affordable and simple, too, Allman said.

"You can get everything you need for less than \$20," he said.

That would include a rod and reel (spincasting models are good for children), some small hooks and weights,

a plastic tackle box and perhaps a bobber or two. A pair of needle-nose pliers will be handy for trimming knots and removing hooks from fish. Make sure you learn the correct knots so monofilament line tied to hooks or lures won't slip, you'll find examples on the Internet.

"Don't forget the good old cane pole," Allman said. "They can be a productive way to catch fish at certain times when fish are close to the bank."

Fish come into shallows in spring and early summer to spawn. Plus insects and minnows are active in the shallows, and big fish chase the food fish. As the water warms as summer progresses, evening and morning might find the fish most active.

Sporting goods stores sell a variety of prepared scented baits and lures than can catch fish. Artificial lures work and the packaging usually explains what fish they aim to attract. Some people use pieces of hot dogs to catch bluegill or catfish. But the number one fish catching bait of all time is earthworms.

"Worms are what almost everybody catches their first fish on," Allman said. "Almost every kind of fish will bite a worm. Bluegill are often everyone's first fish to catch, and bluegill love worms."

The James A. Reed Memorial Wildlife Area in Lee's Summit is noted for a variety of lakes and ponds, including a children's fishing pond. In the Northland, the Guy B. Park Conservation Area offers a lake with good access, and it's noted for good bluegill fishing. Many MDC areas also offer docks or shore access designed for those who use wheelchairs. Many other MDC lakes and ponds are a short day trip from Kansas City.

To find a fishing spot near you, go to <http://on.mo.gov/1h2XwO>.

Early summer is a wonderful time to be outdoors and Missouri is a great place to fish. Enjoy the waters on MDC areas. They are yours thanks to your support for conservation.

— Bill Graham, Media Specialist



## Welcoming women to the shooting sports

**W**omen and guns, what a powerful combination! Getting women involved in the shooting sports has been a passion of MDC for decades. The Women's Firearm Safety Course at Lake City Shooting Range has been in existence since 1991. It was started by David Wyatt, retired range supervisor.

The class is taught by women who originally came to the class as students, received NRA training and became instructors. Most of the instructors have 15 or more years of experience teaching this class.

There are two phases to this class. Phase I introduces women to firearms safety, basic marksmanship skills and shooting. Phase II is much more involved. The students receive more in-depth information on how to purchase a firearm, more in-home safety tips, plus marksmanship skills are emphasized more. The students can shoot different calibers of firearms on the range. That allows them to make more informed decisions on purchasing the firearm that is right for them. Come out and let us make a shooter out of you!

—Judy Farnsworth, Range Staff